

REPORT

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1. The Poverenictvo Podhospodarstva is a branch of the Ministry of Agriculture dealing with all agricultural matters in the whole of Czechoslovakia. It is located at Bratislava, Ulica Suvorova 17, in a six-story building. The branch has 450 employees, a third of whom are women. The number of women increased steadily as the government progressively transferred about 87,000 male employees in various parts of Czechoslovakia to productive work. Originally about half the employees were members of the Communist Party but as a result of the constant purges their number decreased steadily. When an employee was dismissed from the Party he also lost his position. Many senior officials and experts were dismissed in this way, their places being taken by "People's Representatives", who are young people with only one instead of four years professional training. The dismissals also affected pre-war Communists. As a result of these dismissals, which began in 1950, the "People's Representatives" constitute 10 percent

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of all employees. It is difficult to gauge the real feelings of Party members, but it is believed that out of the 225 non-Party employees, 215 are opposed to the present regime. Many employees resign and volunteer for work in mines for fear of sudden dismissals. In spite of this strained situation there does not appear to be any discrimination by the government between Party and non-Party employees.

2. The institution is headed by a representative of the Central Agricultural Office in Prague, who is a loyal Communist with no experience in agriculture but who carries out the instructions received from the Central Office. His two deputies, who are also departmental managers, are also loyal Communists and equally inexperienced in agriculture. Each department has a manager and qualified advisers. The following departments make up the institution:

- a. Personnel (Cadres), who has political functions and is considered the most important department.
- b. Organization, which is responsible for the administration of the whole institution.
- c. Planning, which makes overall production plans for sowing grain, planting vegetables, raising cattle, horses, and other livestock.
- d. Kolkhozes, which is in charge of administration and organization of new kolkhozes.

-2-

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e. Agricultural, which is the basic department and is divided into sections such as: Cultivation of the land; sowing, parasite preventive service; plant nutrition; growing of fruit, grapes and vegetables; and pasture.

f. Livestock raising, which consists of the following sections: Cattle; horse; poultry; pigs; beekeeping; fodder; and fodder preparations.

g. Irrigation. In 1950 rice was planted in Zytni Ostrow (between Bratislava and Komarno). About 200 hectares were cultivated, mainly in the Kolkhozes and Sovkhozes (State farms).

h. Forestry, which is independent, as all forests are state owned.

i. Application of agrarian reform. As the division of the land which was started in 1948 was concluded in 1951, this department has fulfilled its task and is in the process of being liquidated.

j. Sovkhozes, which is also independent and supervises all state farms in Czechoslovakia.

3. An area of 1,750,000 hectares in the whole of Czechoslovakia is sown with grain. Forests extend over approximately the same area. The present 800 kolkhozes have a grain area of 160,000 hectares, giving an average of 200 hectares for each kolkhoze. There are kolkhozes owning areas up to 1,000 hectares. The 240 Sovkhozes hold grain areas totaling 120,000 hectares, so that the average area covered by a sovkhoe is 500 hectares. The remaining grain lands belong to a small number of farmers working individually but in accordance with the

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agricultural policy of the government. Not all farmers in villages where there are collective farms are members of kolkhozes; some try by all means at their disposal to remain independent and not to enter the kolkhozes. In spite of this the number of kolkhozes increased steadily under government pressure. There is no law forcing farmers to join collective farms. Collectivization is still in its beginning and is not yet carried out in a uniform manner.

4. There are four types of collective farms in Czechoslovakia. These are:

a. Farms about to become kolkhozes. They are not included in the above 800.

b. Kolkhozes where machinery is owned and work is done collectively. Members receive their share of the yield according to the land cultivated. Livestock is privately owned. In this type the land has not yet been pooled and still consists of small sections.

c. Kolkhozes which are completely collectivized. Land, machinery and livestock are pooled and work is done jointly on large sections. Each member receives a small sum for his land (200 kronen per hectare). Wages are paid per working day according to fixed norms.

d. Kolkhozes which have reached the final stage. All property and work is collective and all members are paid according to the labor invested.

Kolkhozes of the third and fourth type receive seeds, manure and equipment more cheaply than others. The output of the kolkhozes is

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very low and they often need help from outside. This comes in the form of "brigades" of clerical employees who accept this duty with open dissatisfaction. Sometimes employees are sent to work in the kolkhozes during their holidays and this causes great bitterness.

✓ Work in the kolkhozes and sovkhoses is largely mechanized. All machinery except combines, which are received from the USSR, is of Czech make.

5. In 1950-51 the yield of private farms increased compared to previous years. This was due not only to better rains but also to increased output of work by the farmers. The highest output was noted in the sovkhoses. The sovkhoses had only hired labor paid in cash and in grain, which amounted to 3,000 to 4,000 kronen monthly, while industrial workers earned 4,000 to 5,000 kronen. The government intended to adjust the pay of sovkhose laborers to that of industrial workers, but they also were dissatisfied with their pay because of the constant raising of norms which reduced their wages. In 1950 the average yield from one hectare of land was as follows:

- a. 1,600 kg. grain (rye, wheat, oats, barley),
- b. 20,000 kg. sugar beet,
- c. 13,000 kg. potatoes.

✓ Owing to the shortage of fodder the number of cattle decreased in 1950 and a shortage of meat was felt. There were also shortages of other basic foodstuffs, and 300,000 tons of ^{wheat} ~~wheat~~ and 300,000 tons of fodder had to be brought from the USSR. }

-5- SECRET

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6. Food and clothing are rationed. The meat ration is 1.30 kg. per month; sugar, 1.40 kg. per month; and bread and flour, 10 kg. per month. One hundred twenty clothing and shoe coupons are issued yearly. A pair of shoes costs 45 points and a man's suit costs 48 points. There are state owned shops selling rationed goods in unlimited quantities but at high prices.

7. The following individuals are known:

a. Culen Marek, Manager of Poverenietvo Podhospodarstva in Bratislava.

50X1-HUM

-6-

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b. Dr. Stefan Fiser, Deputy manager and manager of the
organization department.

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c. Dr. Rendek, Deputy manager and manager of the kolkhoze
department.

50X1-HUM

d. Palasty, Manager of Cadre department.

e. Jan Kostial, Head of Agricultural department.

f. Mozola, Head of the Livestock raising department.

g. Lednar, Head of the Sovkhoze department.

h. Dr. Wladyslav Skotta, Head of the Agrarian Reform
Department.

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